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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 26 | Min 19 | Humidity 65% Light rain Sensex 85,231 | Nifty 26,068 | Gold 1,24,022 | Silver 1,53,378 | Dollar 88.81 | Euro 103.22 | GBP 117.20

JOINT OPERATION

5 back-to-back cases of ganja smoking in Koramangala causes concerns about neighbourhood's drug problem

PAGE 3

SHUTTERS DOWN

State's Industrial Training Institute system witnesses steep decline, with 602 institutes shutting down between 2017 and 2023

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62% of Bengaluru's high-rises lack fire-safety clearance — which means two out of every three buildings are ill-equipped to handle emergency, putting lives of lakhs of residents, office-goers and shoppers in jeopardy

TOWERS OF INFERNO

Around 12% of state's buildings lack even initial NOC despite being fully occupied

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Bengaluru is emerging as the epicentre of Karnataka's fire-safety crisis. While the state has over 60,000 high-rise buildings, with 32,000 of them — that is 53% — lacking a fire-safety completion certificate, the capital alone paints an even starker picture. Bengaluru has 42,000 multi-storey structures, yet more than 26,000, a staggering 62% operate without functional fire-safety clearance.

That means nearly two out of every three buildings in Bengaluru are ill-equipped to handle an emergency, putting lakhs of residents, office-goers and shoppers in daily jeopardy. Repeated alerts from the Fire and Emergency Services Department have failed to force compliance, and Bengaluru, along with other major urban centres, continues to report fire incidents with unsettling regularity — often resulting in avoidable loss of life and property worth crores.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

PIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

HIGH CHANCE OF DANGER

Bengaluru: Ground Zero of Fire-Risk Total high-rises:	Without any fire-safety completion certificate	With only NBC compliance but no NOC:	Buildings with neither NOC nor completion certificate
42,000	26,000+	12,000	30,000

"If a major blaze were to strike a densely populated commercial area, rescuers would struggle due to poor design, blocked exits, outdated equipment and zero compliance from building owners —Official

Island of hope for city's lakes

17-year-old designs floating wetlands with native plants that can absorb pollutants, revive lake ecosystems

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The city's lakes are struggling under years of pollution, frothing, and repeated fish kills. Amid constant complaints and slow restoration projects, a 17-year-old has stepped in with a simple but powerful idea of floating islands made from recycled materials that naturally clean the water.

Aarush Moramchetty, a Class 12 student and young environmental researcher, designed the floating wetlands that use native plants to absorb pollutants and revive lake ecosystems. His first prototypes were built entirely at home.

"I used old PVC pipes and pool noodles I found at home. The purification performance of a floating wetland depends far more on the plant species than the raft material itself. For the raft, any buoyant recycled material can be used, but the real impact comes from selecting wetland plants native to Karnataka with strong phytoremediation capacity," he said.

The concept is simple: The roots of the plants hang into the lake, pulling out harmful substances and improving water quality. "Initial pilot tests showed a 33% reduction in aluminum pollution. While aluminium isn't the most toxic metal, in low-pH waters, it converts into soluble Al^{3+} ions,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Note worthy

The South Asian Symphony Orchestra returns to Bengaluru for an unforgettable evening built around one of humanity's most powerful musical statements—Beethoven's Ninth Symphony—with over 120 musicians on stage. **Where: Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; When: November 29, 7 pm**

02 Handmade tales

'The Festival of Handmade' is bringing together over 200 groups from across the country in a vibrant and exciting market that showcases exquisite handicrafts. **Where: Jayamahal Palace Hotel; When: November 26 to 30**

03 Soundtrack of emotions

From heartfelt ballads to high-energy anthems, Sanjith Hegde will be performing live, taking the audience on a rollercoaster of music, visuals and emotion. **Where: Manpho Convention Centre, Nagavara; When: November 30, 6 pm**

04 Symphony of tradition

After the huge success of the first edition, Sitar Rama Rao Utsav is back with a 2nd edition. The festival celebrates the life and music of one of Karnataka's own sons, Pandit NR Rama Rao. The show will feature performances by renowned stalwarts of the music world. **Where: Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Malleshwaram; When: Nov 28, 6 pm**

05 Rooted in stories

Green Literature Festival, a vibrant platform dedicated to identifying, celebrating and promoting books, writing, conversations and various other cultural expressions on the environment, is back for its 5th edition. **Where: Century Club, Cubbon Park; When: November 29, 9.30 am**

Raising the bar high, breaking all barriers

Bengaluru woman bags gold at international weightlifting event, says she wanted to prove that age is no barrier to accomplishing one's dreams

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Inset: Jyothsna Venkatesh, who won a gold medal at ICN World Natural Games held in UAE on November 15 and 16

Jyothsna Venkatesh Naidu, a 48-year-old businesswoman, earned recognition for Bengaluru by winning a gold medal in Natural Bodybuilding and Fitness Angel category at ICN World Natural Games held in United Arab Emirates (UAE) on November 15 and 16. Naidu, mother of a 22 year old daughter, has shown that anything can be accomplished with willpower and determination.

Around 600 people from 27 countries participated in various competitions as part of the games organised by Australia-based I Compete Natural (ICN).

Naidu said she began preparing for the competition in 2019. "I made an attempt to participate in the competition in 2022 but I could not make it. Though it disappointed me, I decided to continue my efforts and won a medal at state-level competition. Now, I am very happy to win a gold medal in weightlifting (open category) at the ICN World Natural Games," she expressed.

When asked what made her participate in weightlifting, Naidu said she wanted to prove that age is just a number and should not be a barrier to realising her dream. "My previous weight was 80 kgs. I, through rigorous exercise and a strict diet, managed to shed 28 kgs. I used to walk 20,000 steps daily (10,000 steps in the morning and 10,000 steps in the evening) apart from a two-hour gym workout," said Naidu.

Weightlifting champion says nothing is impossible with willpower, perseverance and discipline, urges women to pursue their dreams without letting age concern them

She noted that eight people (six men and two women) from India participated in the competition. She expressed gratitude to her coach Sabarish Balakrishna Naidu for his training, guidance and encouragement. "My daughter, who is pursuing law, has also supported me a lot," she said.

She said that nothing is impossible if one has willpower, perseverance, discipline and determination. She said her message to women over 40 is to pursue their dreams wholeheartedly, without letting age be a concern. "When I succeeded in shedding 28 kgs and bagging a gold medal in weightlifting, why not others?" she said.

Sabarish Balakrishna Naidu, her coach, commended Jyothsna for her discipline, dedication, and hard work. "She was very proactive during weightlifting practice," he said, while highlighting her strict diet and punctuality in training.

New arrivals bring fresh buzz to Bannerghatta

Bannerghatta Biological Park is brimming with new life, and animal lovers are flocking in to witness the playful antics of its latest arrivals. Since February 15, the park has been welcoming a steady stream of newborns, a heartwarming trend expected to continue through November. The season began with tigress Aarunya delivering two healthy cubs, followed by the birth of two jungle cat kittens on March 5. Lioness Savitri added to the joy with a robust cub on May 30, and soon after, lioness Saniya delighted keepers with four cubs on June 11. The park's growing gaur population also received a boost with three calves born on May 28, August 28 and October 6 — all strong indicators of the zoo's improved care, nutrition and monitoring practices.

The bird enclosures are equally lively, with several species expanding their feathery families: a painted stork chick on February 13, rose-ringed parakeet chicks on March 31 and April 3, a silver pheasant chick on April 6, sun conure chicks on August 3, and multiple rainbow lorikeet chicks brightening up the aviary. An official said, "While the park celebrates this baby boom, it also acknowledges recent leopard-related incidents involving a boy and a woman." The official noted that in response, safari vehicles have been upgraded with reinforced mesh, and drivers have undergone fresh safety training to ensure such scares don't recur. "With the wildlife family growing, citizens now have a chance to participate through the park's animal adoption programme, an opportunity to support conservation while forming a special bond with their favourite species," said the official. **— BMB**

Exam results announced within three hours of test

In a striking break from years of student complaints about delayed results, the Karnataka Janapada University has stunned its campus with an unprecedented turnaround — announcing exam results within just three hours of the tests ending. For long, students had struggled to apply for scholarships or renew bus passes because results rarely arrived on time. This time, however, the university delivered instant relief, declaring that the era of waiting for weeks or months is over. Acting on a plan laid out by newly appointed Evaluation Registrar Dr K Shivashankar, faculty members completed the assessment of six departments' answer scripts on the very day of the exam and uploaded marks to the UUCMs software without delay. Results for second-semester students of Folk Literature, Journalism and Mass Communication, Kannada and Folklore, MBA RTM and MBA Tourism were released the same afternoon, along with second- and fourth-semester MA Folk Science results. A total of 460 students had appeared for the 2024–25 exams. **— BMB**

Rental demand dips in Bengaluru, NCR leads nationwide trend

A new Magicbricks Rental Index shows that while Bengaluru is often seen as a tough market for tenants, rental demand in the city has actually dipped slightly over the past three months. In contrast, Delhi and the NCR region recorded the highest rental demand in the country, with Greater Noida up by 29.5 per cent, Delhi by 17.8 per cent and Noida by 10.8 per cent. Supply also rose in Ahmedabad (6.5 per cent). After three quarters of sharp growth, the rental market stabilised in the latest quarter, driven largely by infrastructure expansion across NCR. Two-bedroom units account for 44 per cent of demand, followed by one-bedroom homes at 32 per cent. Across major cities, including Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Pune and Mumbai, rental demand fell marginally by 1.2 per cent to 7.2 per cent. Even so, rents continue to climb — up 4.4 per cent this quarter and 18.1 per cent over the past year, with increases in advance payments in some cities. Nationally, overall rental demand rose 0.4 per cent year-on-year. **— BMB**

Bengaluru children lagging in learning, says report

A new child rights index report by the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights revealed that many children in Bengaluru struggle with even basic learning. Despite the city's global reputation as an IT-BT hub, only 17.6 per cent of students from Classes 3 to 5 in Bengaluru Urban can fluently read a Class 2 textbook, with Bengaluru Rural close behind at 17.3 per cent. Math skills are equally poor: just 49.7 per cent of children can solve simple problems, below the state average of 34 per cent. The study, supported by findings from the 2024 Annual Status of Education Report, shows rural learning levels are similarly weak, with only 32.4 per cent of boys and 35.6 per cent of girls in Class 3 able to read Class 2 text, and barely 35.3 per cent of Class 5 boys and 39.9 per cent of girls able to do basic division. Experts say poor teaching quality is a major factor, as many enter the profession due to financial necessity rather than skill or passion, underscoring the need to train educators if the state hopes to build better citizens. **— BMB**

Titan Unveils the Iconic 'Edge Ultra Slim' in Bengaluru Through a First-of-Its-Kind Experiential Launch

Bengaluru, November 14, 2025

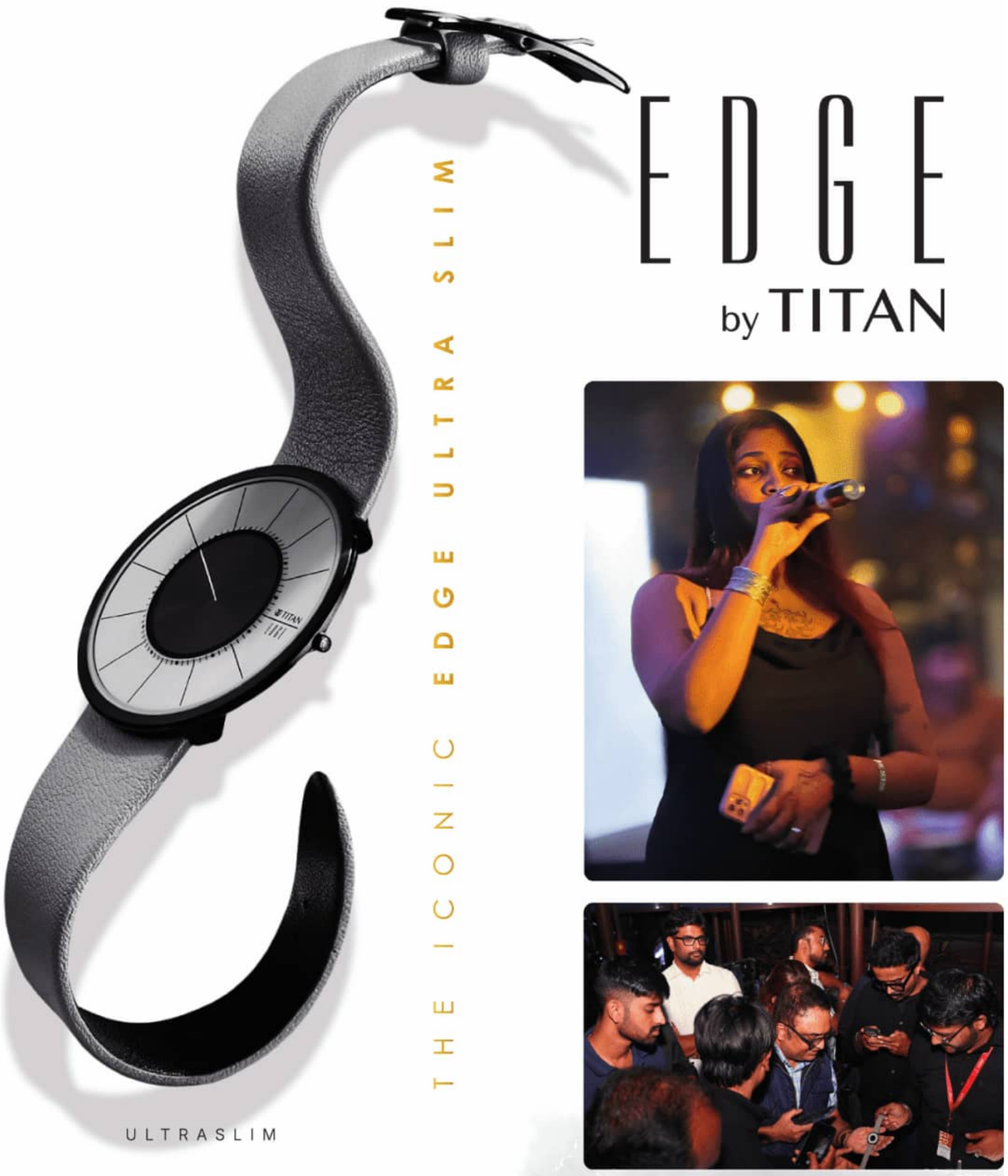
BANGALORE MIRROR

Titan, India's leading watchmaker and a pioneer in precision engineering, unveiled its latest masterpiece — the Titan Edge Ultra Slim, one of the world's slimmest analogue watches at an astonishing 3.3 mm — at an exclusive experiential event hosted at The Scene, Bengaluru. Curated in collaboration with Zimson Watches, the evening elevated the idea of a product launch into an artistic journey, weaving together performance, storytelling, and technology. From its thematic concept "Time — The Fifth Element" to the dramatic reveal, the event brought together Titan's legacy of innovation with a sensorial celebration of design, emotion, and craftsmanship, offering guests an unforgettable encounter with both the brand and its newest icon.

Attended by key leaders Rahul Pandey (National Head – MBR), Jaikishen Mehta (Head Sales – Premium), Biju Nair (Regional Business Manager – South 2), and Zimson Directors Shamool and Sharjeel. The guests shared insights into Titan's minimalist design philosophy, the legacy of the Edge series, and the breakthrough floating-disc movement that defines this new creation.

The experience unfolded through captivating interpretations of the four elements. Wind was brought to life by acclaimed violinist Sarith Sukumaran, Water flowed through a soulful jazz performance by western vocalist Gia Jeen, Sky expanded through a contemporary ballet by Hanna Behr and Moving Body, and Earth grounded the audience with an interactive storytelling moment. This artistic progression built up to the dramatic reveal of the Fifth Element — Time — represented by the Edge Ultra Slim itself.

Crafted in a refined monochrome palette, the Edge Ultra Slim reflects purity, balance, and modern elegance while pushing the boundaries of ultra-thin watchmaking. Now available across Zimson Watches outlets in Bengaluru, this masterpiece invites collectors and enthusiasts to experience Titan's most poetic expression of time yet.



Chamarajanagar–Bengaluru rail plan stalls as land delays persist

Despite approvals, ministerial backing and a ready blueprint, the vital Chamarajanagar–Hejjala rail line remains frozen due to Karnataka's reluctance to start land acquisition

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For more than two and a half decades, the proposal to build a direct rail line from Bengaluru to the border district of Chamarajanagar has remained frozen, largely because the State government has shown no willingness to undertake land acquisition. Currently, the trains to Chamarajanagar are operated via Mysuru.

The Railways has already prepared the route map and blueprint for the proposed Chamarajanagar–Hejjala line, but without State support for acquiring land, the project continues to languish. Officials say the line would significantly cut travel time, improve connectivity to a backward district, and boost industrial prospects along the corridor — yet the stalemate has persisted for years.

Before this plan was conceived, citizens had demanded a Chamarajanagar–Mettupalayam line that would connect Karnataka to Tamil Nadu. However, the alignment failed to clear environmental scrutiny due to the potential loss of forest land and disruption to wildlife movement. As a result, the Chamarajanagar–Hejjala route was identified more than 25 years ago as a practical alternative. But despite its viability, the project never moved beyond the planning stage.

Brief hope surfaced last year when Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy pressed the Railways to expedite the work. With V Somanna serving as Minister of State for Railways at the time, expectations rose again. But no tangible progress followed. The Railways had submitted a land acquisition proposal as early as 2016, estimating a requirement of 1,700 acres for the 141-km stretch at a land cost of around ₹1,500 crore. The State was expected to bear 50% of the cost, but has consistently argued that land acquisition should not be its responsibility for a Railway project, leading to a complete impasse.

For 25 years, the proposed Bengaluru–Chamarajanagar direct rail corridor has remained stuck in limbo. With land acquisition unresolved and political momentum fading, a crucial connectivity project for a backward district continues to languish

Activists say the long-pending rail route, expected to boost connectivity and industry, continues to languish despite clear approvals and sustained lobbying efforts.

Two years ago, the Railways included the line in its list of approved routes and even published the official map online. Leaders such as the late MP R Dhruvanarayan, former minister P Srinivasa Prasad and Kollegal MLA AR Krishnamurthy have repeatedly pushed for implementation, stressing its economic importance. Yet activists say that despite decades of appeals, official approvals and political assurances, the project remains stuck for want of State commitment, leaving commuters disheartened as another year passes with no movement on the ground.

Pilgrims urge new Velankanni train route and vital rail upgrades

Citizens urge Railways to introduce a new long-distance train and address chronic underpass, footpath and access issues near major city junctions

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To facilitate safe and comfortable pilgrimage to Velankanni, members of Eshanya Bengalurina Nagarikara Kalyana Mahavedike (EBNKM) appealed to Union Minister of State for Railways V Somanna to introduce a train from Bengaluru to Hubballi to Velankanni. They requested the minister to recommend to Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw the introduction of a special train from Bengaluru to Velankanni via Hubballi, considering the large number of Christian pilgrims travelling from the city.

During the meeting, EBNKM members informed Somanna that the Archbishop of Bengaluru, Most Rev Peter Machado, had written to the Union Railway Minister on August 12, 2025, seeking the introduction of a direct train connecting Bengaluru to Velankanni via Hubballi. The letter highlighted that pilgrims currently face considerable difficulty due to the lack of a direct rail connection to Velankanni, which lies around 20 km from Nagapattinam and about 92 km from Thanjavur in Tamil Nadu.

A civic delegation appealed to Minister V Somanna for a new pilgrim-friendly train route while demanding wider underpasses, restored footpaths and improved tunnels to ease traffic and enhance safety for daily commuters

At present, pilgrims travelling from Karnataka must board Train No. 16232 Cuddalore Express to Thanjavur Junction, then switch to a local train to Nagapattinam, followed by a taxi, van or bus to reach the Velankanni Basilica. According to the Archbishop's letter, this multi-leg journey is particularly cumbersome for senior citizens, persons with disabilities, pregnant women and children.

The letter further noted that although the Railways, in collaboration with the Church, have built a dedicated station for Velankanni pilgrims, only two to three trains currently operate from there. The Archbishop requested that Train No. 16232 be diverted from Thanjavur Junction via Nagapattinam and Velankanni and that an additional train be introduced from Hubballi to Velankanni to ease pilgrim travel from northern Karnataka.

Speaking to Bangalore Mirror, Albert R, who led the EBNKM delegation, said the group also urged Somanna to take steps to construct an additional underpass alongside the existing Dr. Rajkumar Railway Underpass near the Lingarajapuram flyover. According to him, the current underpass is too narrow, leading to routine traffic congestion. He added that the delegation drew attention to the damaged footpath on Pottery Road, which was affected during the construction of a concrete wall along the railway track. They requested immediate restoration of the footpath for pedestrian safety. The delegation also appealed for the construction of another tunnel near Banaswadi Railway Station to ease local commuter movement.

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9591233247
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Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

No parking zone

Thippasandra

An SUV parked on the footpath along New Thippasandra Main Road is forcing pedestrians to walk on a busy traffic lane, creating daily safety risks.

All dug up

Kavalbyrasandra

A road dug up over two months ago for drainage work at 4th A Cross, MM Layout, remains completely unrepaired, leaving residents to navigate dust, debris, and uneven surfaces.

Eyesore alert

Mallathahalli

Garbage continues to accumulate on an empty plot and spill onto the roadside near Ambedkar Institute of Technology, turning the stretch into a persistent eyesore and health concern.

Smokin' guns of the hood have put narcs on alert

Five consecutive arrests made during daytime in Koramangala point to increasing drug consumption in area, raising concerns over easy access to narcotics, lapses in enforcement

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Koramangala, infamous for its dense concentration of pubs, bars, and round-the-clock activity, is once again under the scanner after police booked five men in back-to-back cases for consuming ganja in public spaces. A series of five FIRs registered on November 9, all within a span of a few hours and in broad daylight, has underscored the neighbourhood's growing drug menace, easy street-level access to narcotics, and persistent enforcement lapses despite routine patrols.

Five FIRs in a day

According to the police, all five drug-use FIRs registered on November 9 were based on specific tips received as patrol teams moved across the Koramangala–NGV belt. In every instance, the accused were found smoking cigarettes laced with ganja in public spaces and attempted to flee upon noticing them, the police said.

Five individuals booked in Koramangala on same day for consuming narcotics; cases all recorded during afternoon underscore increasing drug use without fear of visibility, possibly indicating supply chain that remains largely unchecked

Around 12.40 pm, a team intercepted a 25-year-old man near the Passport Office. He was visibly intoxicated and later tested positive for marijuana at a private hospital. About 20 minutes later, the team detained a 26-year-old man near the Rajendra Nagar NGV Gate; he too tested positive for ganja.

Around the same time, a crime branch team apprehended a 25-year-old man near NGV Kabba after he tried to run when he spotted them. His medical report confirmed recent consumption of ganja.

Shortly after, another patrol unit caught a 26-year-old man near Ambedkar Park. He admitted to having mixed ganja with a cigarette, and a medical test confirmed it.

The final FIR of the afternoon involved a 31-year-old man who was detained near the Koramangala Animal Welfare Association around 2 pm. His test also confirmed marijuana consumption, and a case was booked under Section 27(B) of the NDPS Act. All accused were produced before the jurisdictional PSI, with FIRs supported by medical reports from a private hospital.

Rising drug menace

Koramangala has increasingly been reporting drug-related offences that now extend well beyond nightlife hours. The latest cases, all recorded during the afternoon, points to the increasing drug consumption in the open, unafraid of visibility, and indicative of a supply chain that remains largely unchecked.

Stronger action beyond routine arrests

Speaking to BM, police said that while they managed to book the consumers found smoking ganja in public, there were no leads yet on the peddlers supplying the narcotics. Officers added that checks are usually intensified on weekends, when public footfall in the area is significantly higher.

During a recent review meeting, City Police Commissioner Seemanth Kumar Singh emphasised that the focus must shift toward targeting the peddlers and dismantling their networks rather than simply arresting users.

Meanwhile, DG & IGP Dr MA Saleem, who launched the Sanmitra initiative, has called for a more comprehensive and holistic approach to tackling the drug menace.

Bandana, jacket lead cops to suspects

Three men involved in a robbery targeting a car wash attendant in Shantinagar were arrested after police cracked the case using viral CCTV footage, with a bandana and a reflective jacket becoming clues.

Police launched a probe after CCTV footage of the November 15 robbery on Church Road went viral. During the analysis of footage, officers noticed one of the assailants wore a white bandana, and another had a reflective sticker on his jacket. Using these cues, police scanned footage from more than 300 cameras, eventually narrowing down the suspects' movements. **BMB**

Bank staffer booked for credit card fraud

The Cyber Crime Police have registered a case of cheating and impersonation against a woman contract staffer of a bank for allegedly forging a customer's documents to issue a credit card to her accomplice. The case was filed following a complaint by the Deputy Branch Manager of ICICI Bank, who reported that the accused, identified as Nagamani G, fraudulently processed the application using the credentials of an unsuspecting customer.

Probe revealed that in November last year, Nagamani allegedly cloned the bank records of a woman customer to approve the credit card. **BMB**

FIR filed to trace source of leaked prison video

The Prison Department that had been conducting a probe into the leaked video showing alleged ISIS recruiter Zuhab Hamid Shakeel Maz and two other undertrials using a phone inside the Central Prison, Parappana Agrahara, has now filed an FIR seeking to identify the source of the footage and those responsible for leaking it outside.

In the FIR, the prison department has asked the Parappana Agrahara police to determine how the phones entered the jail, who provided them, who recorded the video, and how it was transmitted outside the prison.

Cop accused in cash van heist: Home Minister calls for strict vigilance

Home Minister G Parameshwara on Tuesday issued a stern warning to the police force after it emerged that a police constable was among those involved in the Rs 7.11-crore cash-van robbery. While he lauded the police for cracking the case swiftly, he expressed deep disappointment over the participation of police personnel in the crime.

Speaking to reporters after a review meeting with senior officers at his Sadashivanagar residence, Parameshwara said he has directed the top brass to maintain strict internal vigilance and enforce discipline across all units. "If any police personnel are found involved in such offences, they will be dismissed from service without hesitation, and legal action will follow," he cautioned.

The minister confirmed that seven people have been arrested so far in connection with the heist, though a few suspects are still absconding. Three special teams were formed to investigate the case, leading to the arrests within a short span.

Parameshwara praised the efforts of the Commissioner, two Joint Commissioners, two DCPs and more than 200 personnel who worked on the case. He said the robbery had caused significant embarrassment to the city and posed a major challenge to the police department.

According to him, the gang had meticulously planned the robbery, but the police managed to crack the case using advanced technical tools. Of the stolen Rs 7.11 crore, Rs 6.29 crore has been recovered so far. **BMB**

Quack, aide on the run after duping techie of ₹48L

The Jnanabharati police have launched a search for a self-styled Ayurvedic healer and his associate who allegedly cheated a software engineer of Rs 48 lakh after luring him with the promise of a permanent cure for his sexual health issues and later threatening him when he refused to pay more.

According to the complaint, the victim, originally from Shivamogga and residing in Bengaluru, began experiencing sexual health problems soon after his marriage in 2023. He initially consulted doctors at a multi-speciality hospital, underwent tests, and was placed on medication.

However, on May 3, 2025, he spotted a makeshift Ayurvedic tent near KLE Law College advertising quick-fix treatments for sexual ailments. Desperate for relief, he approached the stall, where a man introduced him to a person calling himself 'Vijay Guruji'. Guruji allegedly assured him of a "permanent cure" using rare Ayurvedic preparations. The victim said Guruji examined him inside the tent and directed him to buy a herbal substance called 'Devaraj Booti' from Vijayalakshmi Ayurvedic Store in Yeshwanthpur, claiming it was sourced from Haridwar and priced at an exorbitant Rs 1.6 lakh per gram. The victim was instructed to pay only in cash and to come alone.

He withdrew money and purchased the so-called medicine. Guruji later insisted he also needed another product, 'Bhavana Booti Taila', allegedly costing Rs 76,000 per gram. The victim bought 15 grams, paying Rs 17 lakh, using funds arranged by his wife and parents.

Soon after, Guruji allegedly warned that the treatment would fail unless he bought additional quantities of the first product. Under pressure, the victim availed of a Rs 20 lakh bank loan from a private bank to purchase 18 grams more. He also borrowed money from a friend to buy four grams of 'Devaraj Rasabooti', priced at Rs 2.6 lakh per gram, paying another Rs 10 lakh. In total, he spent Rs 48 lakh, with no improvement in his condition.

According to the complaint, recent medical tests revealed signs of kidney damage, which doctors said could be linked to harmful substances in the products he had consumed. When the victim confronted Guruji, the latter allegedly threatened him and insisted he continue buying more "medicine," warning of serious health consequences if he stopped.

The victim has sought legal action against 'Vijay Guruji' and the proprietors of Vijayalakshmi Ayurvedic Store. **BMB**

K'taka's ITIs face sharp decline as enrolments crash statewide

A once-thriving skill-training ecosystem now struggles with empty seats, shuttered institutes and shifting aspirations that push youth away from vocational careers

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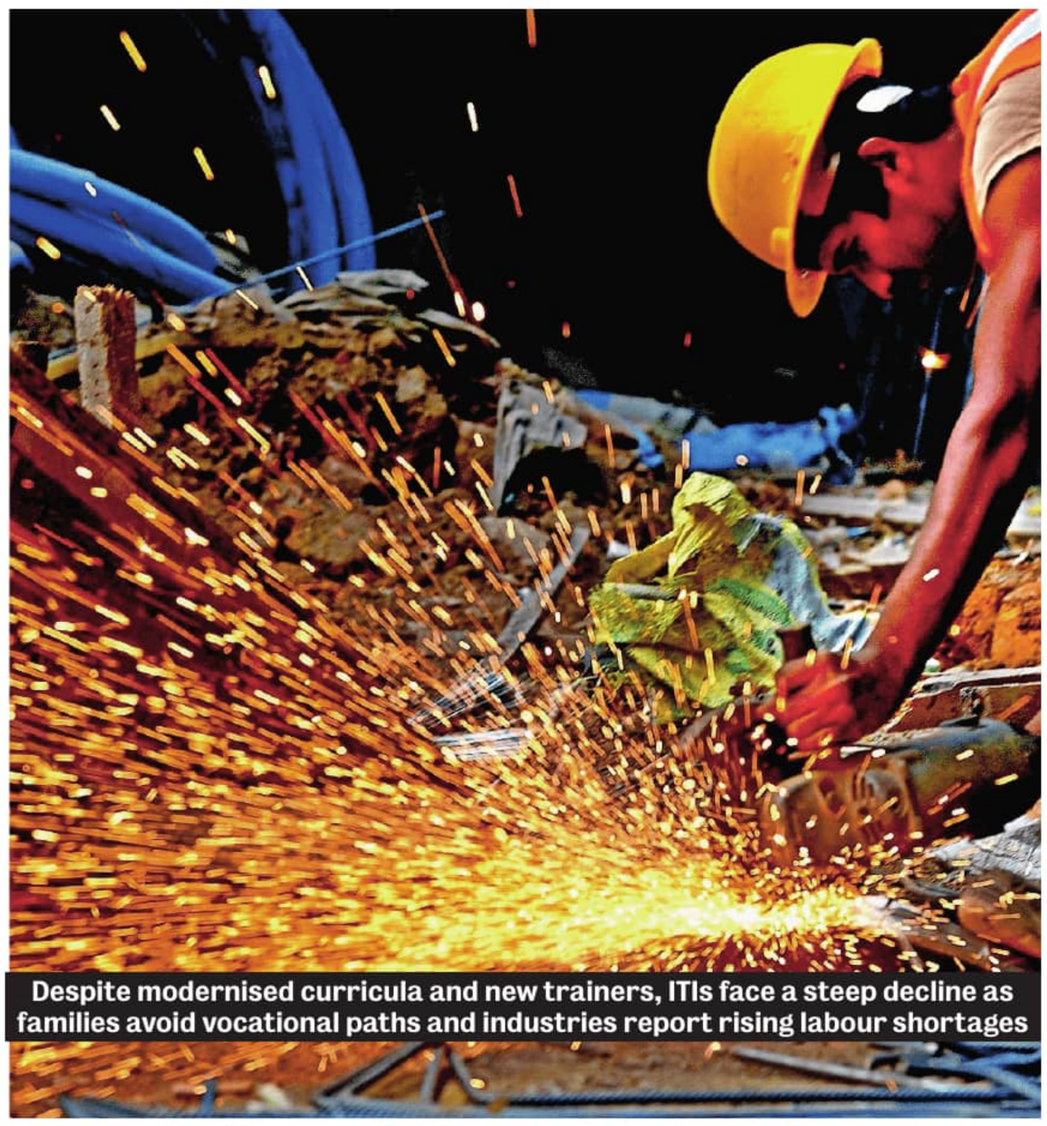


Despite modernised curricula and new trainers, ITIs face a steep decline as families avoid vocational paths and industries report rising labour shortages

Once a backbone of Karnataka's industrial growth, ITIs are shrinking fast as admissions plunge, trades fall vacant and families chase degrees instead of skills—leaving industries scrambling for trained technicians

Karnataka's once-robust Industrial Training Institute (ITI) system has witnessed a steep decline, with 602 institutes shutting down between 2017 and 2023 — a fall of 33.4% from the total 1,800 ITIs that existed earlier. Admissions have also dropped sharply: against 97,000 available seats, fewer than 70,000 students are enrolling today — a reduction of 27.8% in actual admissions and a massive 38,000-seat gap compared with the earlier capacity of 1.5 lakh students.

What was once a flourishing skilling ecosystem that supported post-Independence industrial growth is now struggling to stay relevant. Karnataka began with a handful of government ITIs in 1956 across Bengaluru, KGF, Bhadravati, Vijayapura and Ballari, later expanding steadily to 95 government and 140 private institutes by 2000. As demand for technicians grew, the numbers peaked at 270 government ITIs and 1,231 private ITIs by 2017 — a five-fold rise in private institutions over four decades.

The pandemic, officials say, became the decisive turning point. A sector once known for fierce competition — where even students with 80% marks struggled to secure seats — now sees direct admissions regardless of scores. The network that served 1.5 lakh students at its peak has shrunk to 1,701 institutes with fewer than 70,000 students, marking a 53% fall from earlier strength. Several trades in government ITIs, including dress making, welding, turning, motor vehicle mechanics and diesel mechanics, record almost no enrolments today. Only a few courses such as electrician, electronic mechanic and CNC machine technician continue to draw modest interest.

The decline is largely attributed to changing aspirations. Parents increasingly push children toward degrees and competitive exams, driven by the belief that ITI qualifications lead only to low-paying jobs. As a result, both ITIs and polytechnics are steadily losing traction despite industry demand.

Ironically, private industries continue to report an acute shortage of skilled ITI-grade manpower. Companies are ready to take on apprentices and offer full-time jobs but struggle to find trained candidates. A senior official said the government has modernised curricula and recruited 1,500 permanent Junior Training Officers to improve training quality. "The biggest barrier now," he noted, "is parental perception, not opportunity."

Belagavi's blood tests reinvent drug policing

Belagavi police have introduced a pioneering method to curb drug use by conducting routine blood tests for high-school and college students, with parental consent. This early-detection model — the first of its kind by any district police unit — allows narcotic substances to be traced in the bloodstream for up to a month, helping officers identify early exposure long before addiction sets in. Instead of punitive action, the focus is on counselling, rehabilitation, and timely intervention. With Bengaluru witnessing a sharp rise in drug-related cases, this proactive approach offers a strong blueprint. Adopting similar strategies could help the city shift from punitive policing to preventive, health-centred drug control. **— BMB**

Pilot booked after crew alleges assault

A case has been registered against the pilot of a chartered flight for allegedly sexually assaulting a 26-year-old cabin crew member at a hotel in Bengaluru, police said on Sunday. Although the incident took place in Bengaluru on November 18, the survivor filed her complaint at the Begumpet Police Station in Hyderabad after returning to the city. Police there registered a Zero FIR — which allows a case to be filed regardless of the place of occurrence — under the relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

The FIR has since been transferred to the Halasuru Police Station in Bengaluru, where the investigation is now underway. **— PTI**

DKS orders probe into irrigation case delays

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar has ordered a full inquiry into the massive backlog of nearly 61,000 irrigation-related court cases, many linked to long-pending land acquisition for major water projects. He said the probe will assess whether lapses by officials or government lawyers weakened Karnataka's legal position, resulting in repeated setbacks and substantial financial exposure for the state.

The government is also examining failures surrounding the Krishna Upper Bank Project, where prolonged delays and procedural lapses could leave Karnataka vulnerable to liabilities running into several lakh crore rupees, raising serious administrative concerns.

Shivakumar said the government will soon decide whether to form a Special Investigation Team or pursue a departmental inquiry, assuring strict action against those responsible for the prolonged negligence. He added that an all-party meeting on the Mekedatu project will be held in Delhi after discussions with the Chief Minister, with a delegation to the Prime Minister if needed for broader consensus.

To prevent future lapses, the state plans legal reforms, a dedicated review system, stronger scrutiny of court filings, and a separate wing for land acquisition for major road projects. **— BMB**

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Superstition bust

In Chamarajanagar, CM Siddaramaiah cheerfully kicked aside the old myth that politicians "lose power" if they step into the district. "My authority is safe now and later," he joked, brushing off talk of omens and reminding everyone he tours all districts equally. On leadership-change chatter, he shrugged it off as background noise—Cabinet reshuffles, he said, resting firmly with party seniors. And for 2028? He quipped he'll keep presenting budgets as long as people continue expecting him to.

Fruit heist

In Chikkaballapur, pomegranate orchards now look more like guarded compounds as soaring prices have turned the fruit into midnight loot. Entire rows vanish overnight, forcing farmers—who earn ₹5–9 lakh per acre—to install CCTV cameras, alarms, fences and even sleep near their fields. Police promise action only after complaints arrive, leaving growers to guard their "red gold" like sentries in farmlands that suddenly need high-security systems.

Chair wisdom

At Indira Gandhi's birth anniversary, DK Shivakumar revived her classic line about doers versus beneficiaries, nudging workers to join the "work hard" camp—while slyly reminding them that even the KPCC chief's chair comes with an expiry stamp. He followed it with a reality check: Karnataka's biggest troubles aren't lurking overseas but right here at home, in villages battling poverty and caste rifts. No need to cross continents to find challenges—just look around, he said.

Metro salve

While Bengalureans mutter "not another Metro line," Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara insists the Tumakuru extension is the city's much-needed pressure valve. With thousands commuting daily from Nelamangala to Kyatsandra, he argues a fast-track ride could ease Bengaluru's traffic choke, water stress and everyday chaos. Critics remain unconvinced, but Parameshwara is pitching the line as the perfect remedy—even if half the city isn't ready to swallow the pill just yet.

Street spat

A routine bandh in Honnali exploded into a street-corner spectacle as Congress and BJP leaders clashed—shouts, shoves and slogan duels included—over support prices for maize and paddy. What began as a BJP-backed shutdown led by Renukacharya spiralled when Congress MLA Shanthana Gowda staged a counter-protest, accusing the bandh of troubling residents. Tempers flared, maize was dumped from a tractor onto the road, and police were left scooping grain just to restore order.

Jail ripples

The leaked jail video has taken a sharp new turn, with the actor's wife Vijayalakshmi inching into the investigation's frame. Police at Parappana Agrahara are preparing a notice after Darshan's aide Dhanveer, questioned twice already, claimed he forwarded the viral clip to her. That single claim has widened the probe, adding yet another twist to a scandal already bursting with irregularities—from Umesh Reddy to Shakeel to Tarun Raj allegedly enjoying VIP comforts behind bars. **— Sridhar Vivan**

Board under fire for delay in action on polluted Chandapura Lake

Tribunal flags Karnataka pollution board's non-compliance, pushes Chandapura Lake case to 2026 amid stalled STP work and slow penalty recovery

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

The southern bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has highlighted the laid-back approach of the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) in managing water pollution at Chandapura Lake. In its recent order, the tribunal noted that its earlier order to KSPCB, issued more than two months ago, has yet to be complied with. As a result of this delay in action, the green court has postponed the matter of pollution in Chandapura Lake until January 2026.

In September, the NGT had directed the Karnataka SPCB to conduct an inspection, collect water samples, and submit a fresh report with a detailed water analysis, including the progress on recovering the remaining amount of environmental compensation. However, the Board's compliance has fallen short, prompting the tribunal to push the hearing to next year.

The issue dates back to 2021, when the NGT registered a suo motu case after reports of worsening pollution in Chandapura Lake. A joint committee was constituted and carried out inspections in 2022. The team recommended several remedial measures for the revival of the water body. Based on the findings, the tribunal imposed

Chandapura Lake's condition reflects continued sewage inflow, industrial effluents, and encroachment pressures

an environmental compensation of 500 crore on the Karnataka government for failing to prevent pollution in and around the lake. The State was permitted to recover the amount from industries, encroachers, and responsible officials.

The committee comprised experts from the Central Pollution Control Board, KSPCB, Indian Institute of Science, State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority, National Wetland Committee, State Wetland Authority, and the Bengaluru district administration. Additional reports from the then chief secretary and the Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board corroborated the extent of deterioration. Untreated and partially treated sewage inflow, industrial effluents from Kachanayakanahalli Lake upstream, and rampant encroachments were identified as major causes of damage.

In the latest progress update, the Karnataka government stated that the proposed 10 MLD Sewage Treatment Plant under the Bommasandra UGD Scheme remains stuck at the land acquisition stage. Meanwhile, the KSPCB reported that no sewage is currently entering the lake. The Board has imposed environmental compensation of 140.26 crore on non-compliant industries in the lake's catchment area but has recovered only 1.91 crore from six units so far. The remaining amount is yet to be collected, contributing to the delay that the NGT has now taken note of.

KASSIA hails labour codes as 'end of era of fragmented norms'

Industry body says simplified labour codes will reduce compliance burdens, enhance transparency, and strengthen the MSME ecosystem for a modern, growing India

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The Karnataka Small Scale Industries Association (KASSIA) has welcomed the introduction of the new labour code and described it as one of the most transformational labour reforms undertaken in the country.

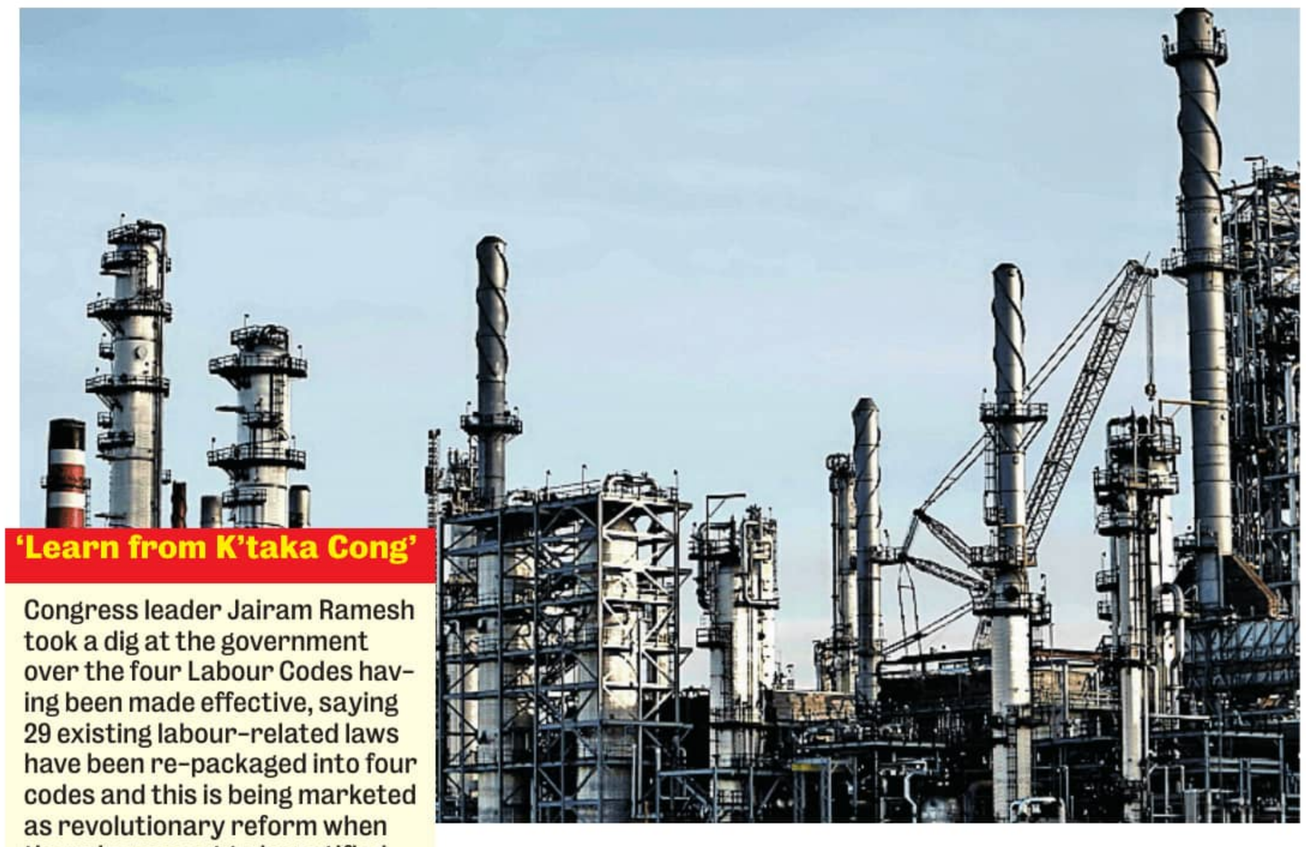
The new labour code, aimed at creating a modern workplace ecosystem, focuses on transparency, simplification and compliance ease — factors seen as crucial for improving productivity and supporting sustainable growth in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector. Industry representatives say the reforms will significantly reduce the compliance burden while continuing to safeguard workers' rights and welfare.

KASSIA president BR Ganesh Rao said the new code provides a fair and balanced framework that will help MSMEs operate with greater clarity and confidence. He noted that consolidating multiple labour laws into simplified codes was a long-pending demand that would enhance formalisation, ease of doing business and generate better employment opportunities.

Rao added that the association views these measures as progressive and aligned with the aspirations of a growing economy. According to him, the reforms are expected to boost industrial growth, attract greater investment and strengthen the MSME sector's contribution to the national economy. He described the move as marking the end of a long era of fragmented regulations and the beginning of a transparent, growth-oriented framework for "new India".

The KASSIA president said the revised code offers several advantages to both employees and employers, including a uniform minimum-wage structure, improved flexibility in hiring, better work–life balance, workforce formalisation and greater transparency in wage payments and compliance processes. However, he acknowledged that certain concerns remain, particularly the potential increase in labour costs for MSMEs and the financial burden arising from higher social-security obligations.

KASSIA has urged the state government to ensure smooth implementation of the labour code and provide adequate support, including clear guidelines and awareness programmes for MSMEs across Karnataka.



KASSIA urges the State to ensure smooth implementation, awareness drives, and guidance so small industries can transition without disruption

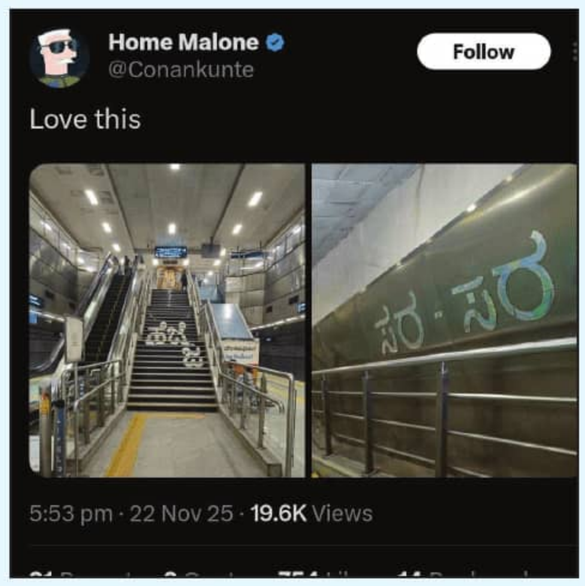
Welcoming India's sweeping labour reforms, KASSIA said the new code modernises workplace regulations, empowers MSMEs with clarity and ease of doing business, and improves worker protections, though cost concerns still need attention

'Learn from K'taka Cong'

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh took a dig at the government over the four Labour Codes having been made effective, saying 29 existing labour-related laws have been re-packaged into four codes and this is being marketed as revolutionary reform when the rules are yet to be notified. In a post on X, Jairam Ramesh asked if these codes make five essential demands of workers for Shramik Nyay a reality. "National minimum wage at Rs 400 per day, including for MGNREGA, right to Health law that will provide universal health coverage of Rs. 25 lakhs, employment guarantee act for urban areas, comprehensive social security for all unorganised workers, including life insurance and accident insurance and a commitment to stop contractualisation of employment in core government functions," he said. He said the Modi Government must learn from the examples of Congress government in Karnataka, "which pioneered labour reform for the 21st century with their groundbreaking gig worker laws that preceded the codes". ANI

SOCIALTATTLE

WHAT'S TWEETING:



User @Conankunte shared photos of the metro station steps marked with the Kannada phrase "sara sara hejje." While "hejje" translates to steps, "sara sara" is an onomatopoeic expression that mimics a soft, rustling or flowing movement. The post quickly caught attention online, with several users in the comments explaining the meaning of the words in English for those unfamiliar with Kannada.

User @goLoko77 posted a video highlighting the "horrible situation" at the Croma Adventure Trail in Panathur, where IT employees

Aristotle
@goLoko77
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#Bengaluru #Panathur — Horrible situation at the Croma Adventure Trail. IT employees are risking themselves on narrow pathways to reach work.

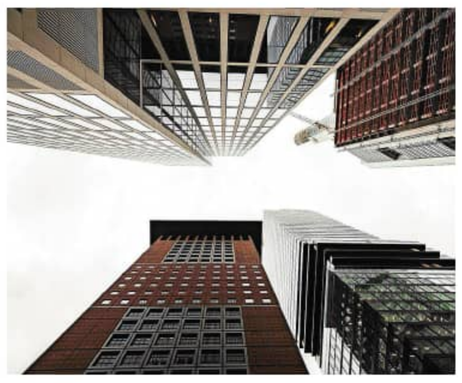
are seen navigating dangerously narrow pathways just to reach their workplaces. Commuters say the issue has been ongoing for months and continues to be raised repeatedly without any relief.

Second and final warning issued for building owners

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Under the Karnataka Fire Services Act, 1964, and the National Building Code, every building above 15 metres or seven floors must secure an NOC during construction, obtain a fire-safety completion certificate on completion and renew it every two years. Yet officials admit that more than half the state's high-rises have bypassed the final clearance, and about 12 percent lack even the initial NOC—despite being fully occupied as residential, commercial and office spaces. The fire safety department has already issued notices to building owners who failed to get or renew their safety certificates.

A second and final notice is underway. If owners still ignore it, the department is empowered to recommend power disconnection, essentially shutting down these buildings for non-compliance. Earlier audits had also flagged hundreds of "high-risk" towers, recommending cancellation of trade licences and action from local bodies. Those reports, however, have largely gathered dust, exposing a systemic failure in enforcing safety norms.



An official said, "The numbers show that India's tech capital is also Karnataka's most unsafe city when it comes to fire preparedness. Fire officials warn that if a major blaze were to strike a densely populated commercial area, rescuers would struggle due to poor design, blocked exits, outdated equipment and zero compliance from owners."

Neeta K, an activist said, "With Bengaluru adding thousands of new high-rises every year, the crisis demands urgent political will, stricter enforcement and criminal penalties—not just notices—before the next disaster strikes."

'Saving lakes not optional, it is survival'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

which are far more harmful. These ions interfere with fish gill function, reduce biodiversity, and stress aquatic ecosystems," he explained.

Moramchetty achieved these results by using a smart mix of local plant species radish, mustard, hibiscus, and Malabar melastome. "The reduction came mainly from using a diverse mix of hardy local species. The next stage is to pair species more deliberately -- nitrate absorbing plants alongside heavy metal accumulating ones to create a targeted, pollutant-specific mix," he said.

His floating islands project builds on a strong research foundation. Aarush earlier published a decade-long study of Ulsoor Lake (2012–2023) in the International Journal of Applied Environmental Sciences, highlighting high coliform levels and calling for urgent action. His findings led to local discussions on lake restoration and positioned him as a young voice contributing to environmental solutions.

What makes his design stand out is how accessible it is. "My design focuses on simplicity, low cost, and community scalability. Instead of relying on specialised materials, it's modular and easy enough for local residents, schools, or lake groups to build and deploy themselves. Given the scale of pollution and the visibility of impact, Bellandur or Varthur Lake would be the ideal next sites."

His two-week pilot test was conducted at home under controlled conditions. It wasn't a full lake deployment, but the outcomes are encouraging. "The results indicate strong potential and justify larger, longer field-based experiments," he said.

The teenager pointed out rejuvenating lakes is not just a scientific challenge but a responsibility. "When I looked at the lakes, I didn't just see water. I saw the health of a city, its culture, and its people. Saving them isn't optional, it's a matter of survival."

BM SIMPLY PUT

We speak to experts to find out how you can protect your phone from APK malware and hacks

SCREEN SAVER

With a surge in Android hacking incidents, cybercriminals are increasingly targeting users through fake apps disguised as legitimate services. These malicious APK files, often shared via WhatsApp or SMS, can steal personal and banking data in minutes. Here's a quick guide on how these attacks work, what warning signs to look for, and how to stay safe in India's growing digital threat landscape.

What is an APK malware attack and how does it unfold?

APK malware attacks usually start with a WhatsApp or SMS from a contact or agency posing as a trusted institution — a bank, government office, utility company, or shopping site. The message contains an APK file claiming to fix KYC issues, settle bills, or offer new services. Once installed, the app requests SMS permissions, collects sensitive data like Aadhaar, UPI, and card details, hides its icon or shows fake "pending" alerts, and quietly transmits stolen information to remote servers — continuing to run even after restarts.

What digital footprints and device symptoms suggest you are infected?

Warning signs include rapid battery drain, overheating when idle, unexplained data spikes, slower performance, random ads or pop-ups, unknown apps appearing, strange permission requests, and disabled Play Protect or antivirus alerts. These are strong indicators your phone may be compromised.

How can you reduce the risk of installing APK malware?

Never download or install APK files shared via WhatsApp or unverified links. Stick to the Google Play Store, check app permissions before approving, keep your OS updated, use a strong screen lock, and enable Play Protect. Avoid rooting your phone, and review installed apps regularly to remove suspicious ones.

Which malicious Android malware wwfamilies should users watch for?

Watch out for Anatsa (TeaBot), which disguises itself as PDF or QR apps and uses screen streaming to steal banking credentials, and Rafel RAT, which allows attackers full remote control, steals call logs, SMS, and can even lock devices for ransom. Both exploit Android's accessibility settings and target older devices to avoid detection.

How and where should you report a mobile malware attack in India?

Cyber incidents must be reported to CERT-In within six hours of discovery via email at incident@cert-in.org.in or by calling 1800-11-4949. Provide as many details as possible — device model, app name, date, and screenshots — to help authorities track the malware and prevent wider attacks.

What immediate steps should you take if you suspect your phone is compromised?

Disconnect from Wi-Fi and mobile data, note suspicious messages, change passwords from another secure device, uninstall unknown apps, and run a security scan. If issues persist, back up essential data and perform a factory reset. Keep screenshots and logs as evidence before resetting.

What longer-term steps can strengthen mobile security?

Enable multi-factor authentication not based on SMS, install verified security tools, and educate yourself on phishing tactics. Organisations should restrict sideloading, deploy mobile device management (MDM), and push regular security updates. Vigilance and digital hygiene remain your strongest defense against evolving malware threats.

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I Muniraja Harpura Govindaiah S/O, Govindaiah R/o N0-805,2nd Cross,surya Bakery, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru-560040 have changed my name to Raj Kumar Harpura Govindaiah.

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HEALTH TIP: To avoid flaky skin, use a gentle cleanser, moisturise well, exfoliate weekly and seal moisture with face oil

Dim the lights in the evening and swap to warm or soft lights, or light a candle; turning off the bright ceiling lights help in falling asleep

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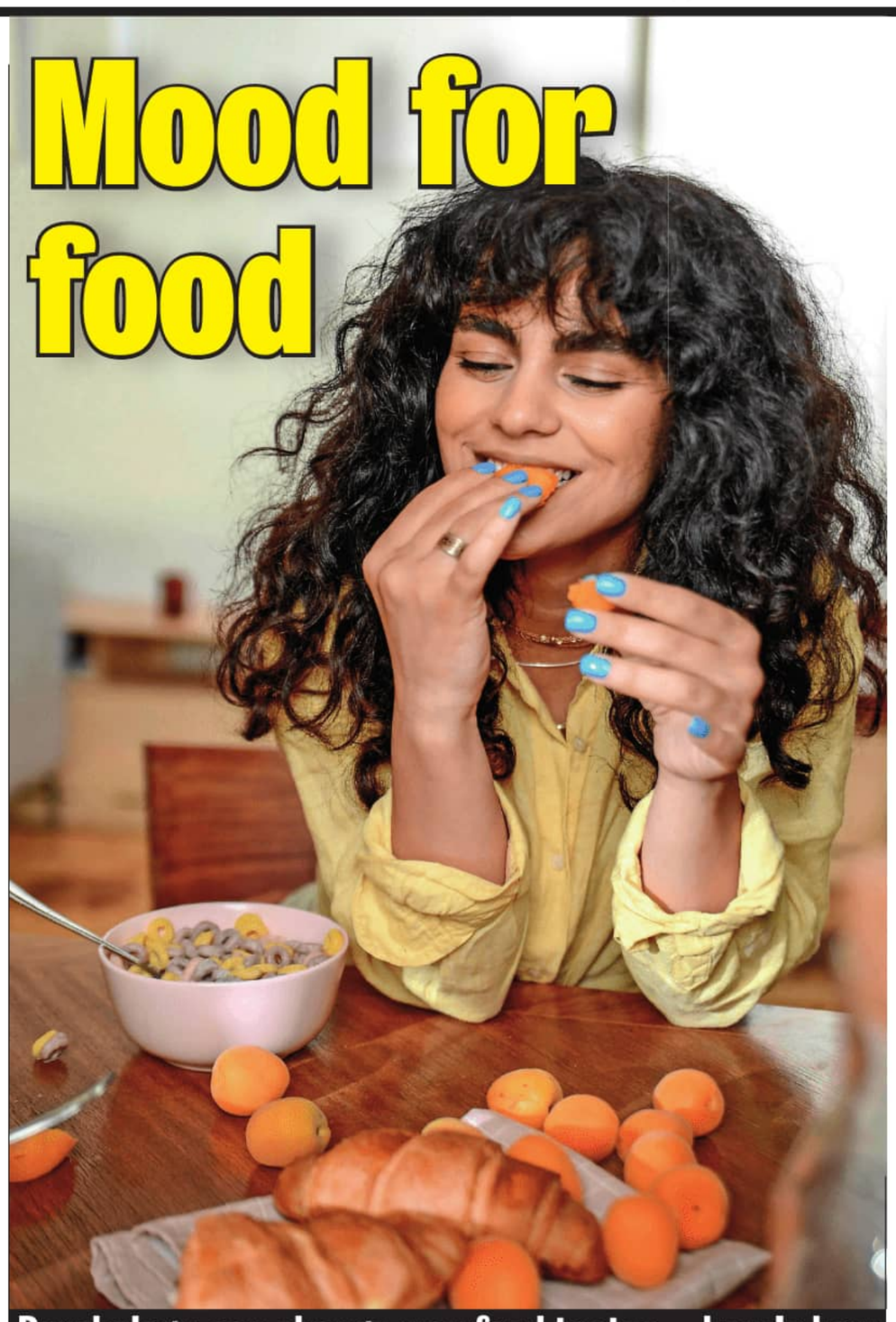
Mood for food



Psychology can change way food tastes – here's how to use it to make most of your meals

Ever eaten while doom-scrolling and realised you barely tasted anything? Or found your favourite pasta strangely bland after a stressful meeting, yet somehow delicious on a relaxed Saturday evening?

We often think taste comes from ingredients and cooking techniques. But taste isn't just on the plate. Our emotions, expectations – even the people sitting with us – can shape how food tastes.

This mind-food connection sits at the heart of gastrophysics, a field that studies how our senses, brain and mental states shape our eating experience. Once we know how this works, we can start using simple psychological shifts to make everyday meals taste richer, brighter and more satisfying, without changing a single ingredient.

Mindful eating means paying attention to each bite; noticing flavours, textures, aromas and the sensations in our body as we eat.

But most of us don't eat like this. We eat while scrolling, replying to messages or watching Netflix in the background. Our attention gets divided, our senses dull and we go into "autopilot" mode.

We chew quickly, swallow automatically and miss the subtle flavours and signals from our body telling us we are full. We also lose touch with our body's hunger cues, which makes overeating more likely. Normally, rising levels of the "hunger hormone" ghrelin and gentle stomach contractions alert us it's time to eat.

But distraction makes those messages easier to ignore.

Essentially, our body also has a sophisticated system to tell us to stop. As we eat, our stomach stretches, sending "fullness" signals to the brain. At the same time, hormones such as leptin and cholecystokinin are released, creating a feeling of satiety that slowly builds over the course of a meal.

When we're distracted, we may miss this delicate hormonal conversation.

A 2011 study found that people who played a computer game during lunch felt less full afterwards, remembered less about their meal and snacked more later. Distraction also weakens the memory of eating – and when the brain forgets food, it will seek more food sooner. Appetite, therefore, isn't just about biology. It's shaped by our attention and memory too.

Slowing down, on the other hand, improves our sensory awareness. Suddenly, a tomato isn't just "tomato-y", it becomes sweet yet tangy, juicy yet firm. Chocolate doesn't just "taste nice", it melts slowly, bitter at first, then rich and velvety. Mindfulness acts like turning up the volume on our taste buds.

> **Negative emotions such as stress can dull our sensitivity to pleasant flavours as when we're tense, our body prioritises survival**

Mood as a flavour enhancer

Negative emotions such as stress, anxiety and frustration can dull our sensitivity to pleasant flavours. When we're tense, our body prioritises survival, not enjoyment. Stress hormones narrow our attention, and pleasure-based functions such as flavour appreciation get pushed aside. That's why food can taste flat when we're upset.

In one experiment, published in 2021, participants who watched a horror movie felt more anxious and rated juice as less sweet than those who watched a comedy or documentary film.

The participants who watched the horror movie even drank more juice than the others – possibly trying to "find" the sweetness their brain was suppressing. These effects may be linked to physiological changes, as anxiety can influence autonomic nervous system activity and hormone levels that affect taste perception and consumption.

When we feel calm, safe and socially connected, the opposite happens. Our brain releases feel-good chemicals such as dopamine and serotonin, and food tastes better. Think of how amazing your favourite food tastes when you're laughing with friends or eating at a festival.

So if dinner suddenly tastes "off", the recipe might be fine, your nervous system may just be in a different state. Next time you've had a heavy day, try pausing for five minutes before eating. Play soft music, take a few deep breaths, or eat with someone who makes you feel relaxed.

Food is what you think

Before we even taste food, our brain forms predictions about what it should taste like. And those expectations shape what we actually taste.

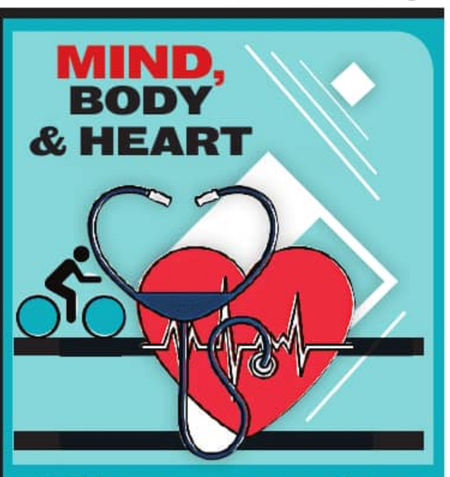
Visual cues do a lot of this work. We expect red foods to be sweet, green foods to feel bitter or sour, and golden-crisp foods to crunch. The sound of a crisp bite sends a signal to the brain that the food is fresh and satisfying.

Presentation matters too. Fancy plating isn't just for Instagram. It changes taste perception. In a 2024 study, the shape, size, and colour of the plate shifted how appealing a dessert looked.

The features of the plate also affected how much people thought it was worth, and even how modern or traditional it felt. Black plates made desserts seem more premium and exciting, while white plates made them feel more familiar and understated. Even the weight of cutlery changes our experience. Heavier cutlery gives the impression that the food is premium.

Our sense of smell is another factor. When people had their noses blocked with nose clips for an experiment, a sweet drink tasted less intense and less satisfying, showing how aroma shapes the full flavour experience. This is exactly why food feels bland when we have a cold or a blocked nose.

(By Harmehak Singh, Liverpool Hope University, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Food for acidity

Banana:
Bananas are extremely beneficial for gut and stomach health because of their high fiber content which enhances the digestion process. They are rich in potassium and increase the production of mucus in the stomach which prevents the excess acid formation and also fights the harmful effects of excessive acid production. A ripe banana is a perfect antidote to severe bouts of acidity.

Cold Milk:
It is a known fact that milk contains a high amount of calcium which makes it a superfood for bone health. But did you know that calcium is also one of the main ingredients in your over-the-counter antacids? Calcium helps to maintain the pH balance and aids in proper digestion.

Buttermilk:
Cold buttermilk is another useful antidote to acidity. To get relief from heartburn, drink up a glass of cold buttermilk. Buttermilk contains lactic acid that neutralizes the acidity in the stomach. The lactic acid further soothes the stomach by coating the stomach lining and reducing the irritation and acid reflux symptoms. Besides, buttermilk is a naturally occurring probiotic. The good bacteria present in probiotics prevent the gas build-up and bloating that often causes acid reflux.

Almonds:
Another home remedy that works well to relieve acidity is raw almonds. Raw almonds are simply natural almonds that have not been soaked or tampered with in any way. In ancient times in middle eastern countries, almonds were regarded as a natural remedy for ulcers and heartburn. Almonds are rich in natural oils which soothe and neutralize the acid in the stomach. The high fiber content of the nut also helps in the digestion process. **–Femina**

MIRRORLIGHTS

'There is no such thing as a party drug. Any kind of narcotic causes problems'

Dr (Col) Joy Dev Mukherji, one of India's leading neurologists, has issued a stark warning against the growing social acceptance of recreational and "party" drugs, stressing that even cannabis can trigger strokes, seizures and cardiac complications and that the practise is driving a worrying rise in young patients arriving with severe neurological emergencies.

Speaking in an ANI podcast, Dr Mukherji, who has over 28 years of clinical experience and served in the Armed Forces Medical Services before joining Max Healthcare in 2006, said there is "absolutely no justification" for drug use. He described its growing social acceptance as "deeply alarming."

"No way can we justify using drugs. Unfortunately, it has become so rampant that it is getting social acceptance, which is incorrect and absolutely harmful to the core. Any kind of drug will cause all kinds of problems. It can cause strokes. Even cannabis can cause strokes. It can cause headaches, and it can cause lung problems. It can cause cardiac problems. This is well-known," he said.

Dr Mukherji alleged that such substances are being portrayed as harmless by vested interests, while categorically rejecting the notion of 'safe party drugs'.

"There's nothing like a party drug," he said.

"It is all being pushed as a party drug. It has been coloured as a party drug. As if it will enhance your psychedelic mind or something like that. But I think it's absolutely wrong; it's unequivocally dangerous," he added. **–ANI**

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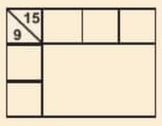
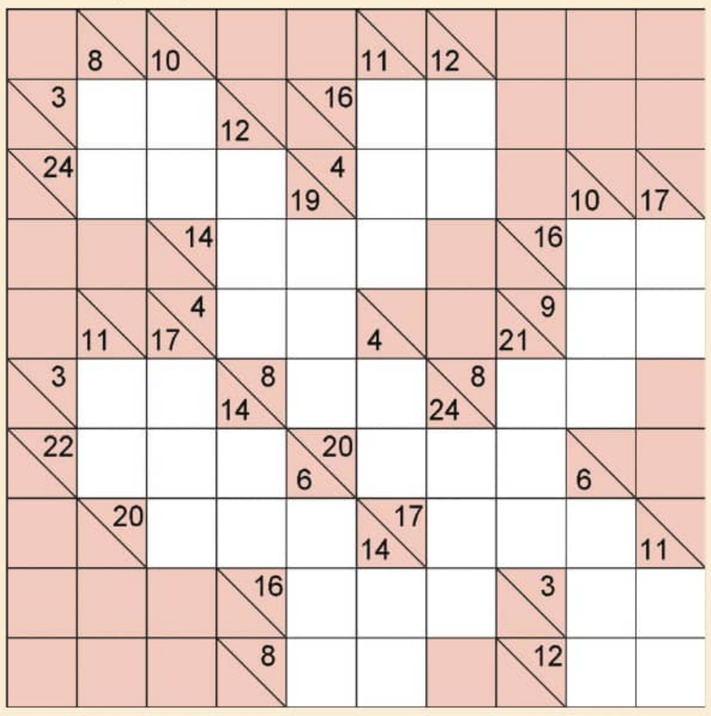
Kakuro

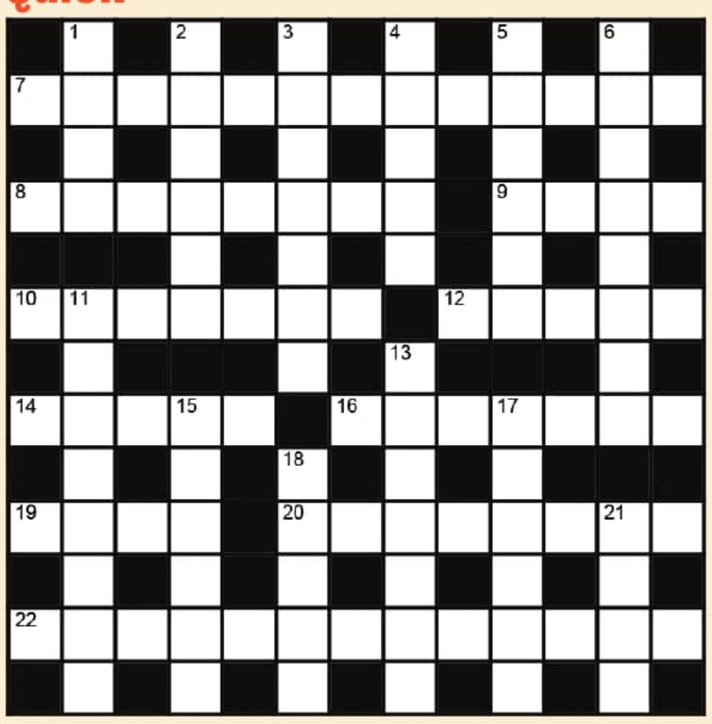
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Denotes a physical disorder largely influenced by emotional state (13)
8 Marked on the skin with uneven spots, etc. (8)
9 Basset hound of comic strips (4)
10 Let or allowed to fall (7)
12 Did an ushers job (3,2)
14 To throw out (5)
16 Small imaginary beings with magical powers (7)
19 Famous temple in Basavanagudi (4)
20 The border of the street (8)
22 Unnecessarily and absurdly tries to embellish what is already perfect and beautiful (6,3,4)

DOWN

1 Brandy letters (4)
2 Polar surface (6)
3 They stand between the sticks on the football field (7)
4 Noisy and disorderly (5)
5 Perplex or bewilder (6)
6 Birth to death (8)
11 Kannada star who was kidnapped by Veerappan (8)
13 Otalgia (7)
15 Settlement or settlers as a segregated group (6)
17 Impulsively (6)
18 Recently made (5)
21 Lacklustre (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: K EQUALS T

KML YKQIY GPDZGPL, OJK FU PUK GVELZ.

Linemaro

Did you die recently? 'cause girl, you look like an angel to me

Mindchow

Pain has this most excellent quality. If prolonged it cannot be severe, and if severe it cannot be prolonged

Joke of the day

There is only one good substitute for the endearments of a sister, and that is the endearments of some other fellow's sister

Loop

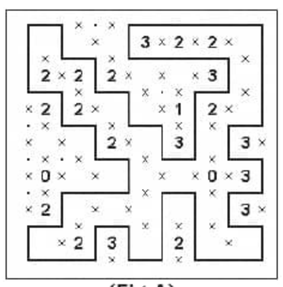
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

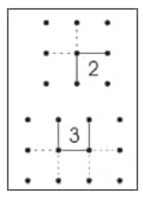
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

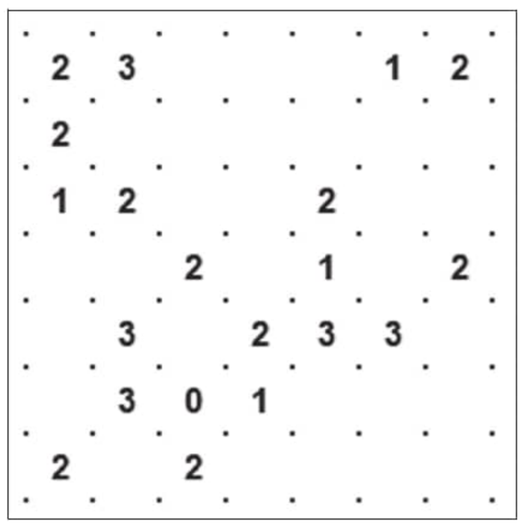
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



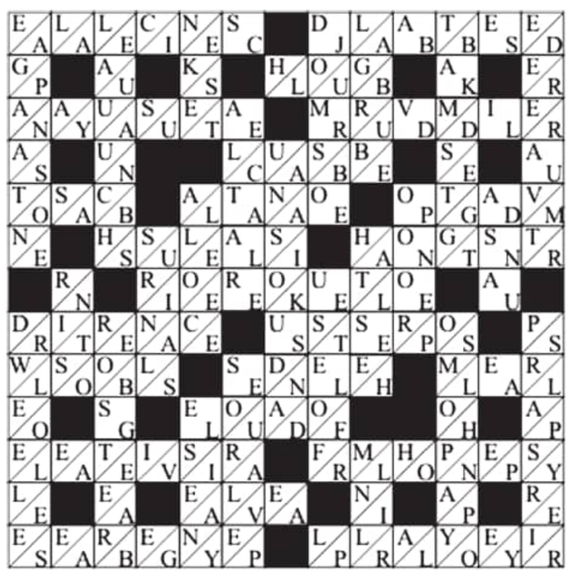
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



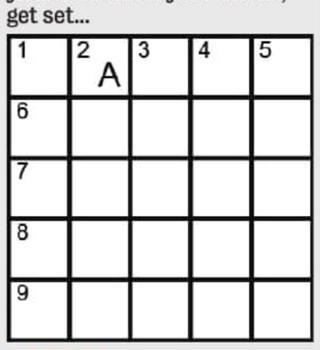
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

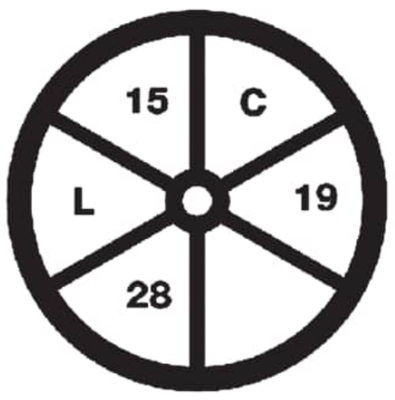
1 Spang; 6 Tital; 7 Noyes; 8 Leal I; 9 Me LIC

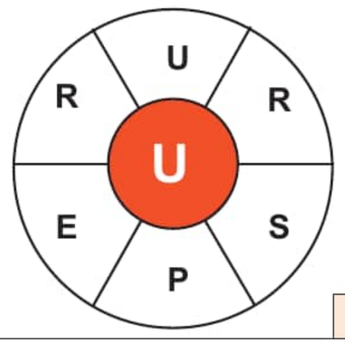
DOWN

1 In Cap; 2 To all; 3 I sine; 4 Ma leg; 5 TE sly

Mensapuzzle

What is missing from the empty segment of the wheel?





Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

12 Average; 14 Good; 16 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

5		9			8			
	2	4	7	5		3		
	7				1	2		
					9		2	
8			6		4			5
	1		5					
		3	8				6	
		7		4	2	8	9	
			9			7		3

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 24

2 5 8 9

Medium = 36

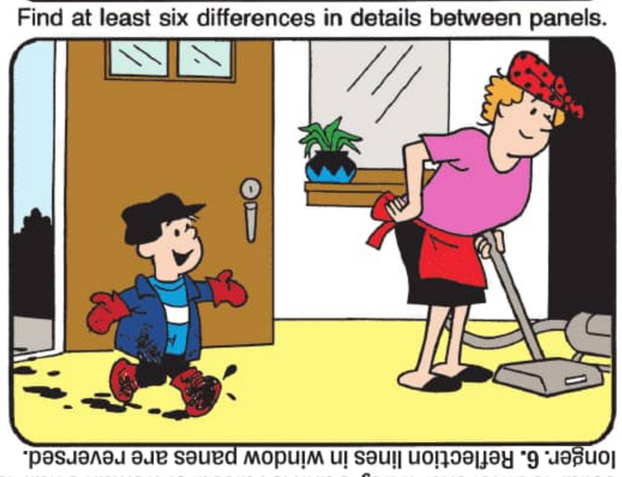
4 6 6 9

Hard = 24

3 4 8 6

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



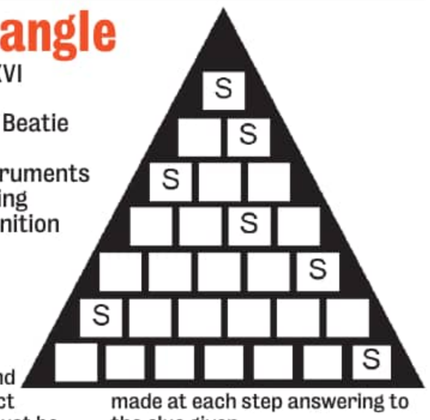
Differences: 1. Plant is moved. 2. Mirror is wider. 3. Boy's collar is different. 4. Boy's arm is raised. 5. Woman's hair is longer. 6. Reflection lines in window panes are reversed.

Riddler

Bit by bit, from where I sit, Through me all must flow. My mother holds me tightly, And brings me all I know. Encased within a tower, Atop a desk, or lap, or palm; When fans are all around me, I must stay cool and calm. What am I?

Alpha triangle

1 Atomic number XVI
2 and them
3 _ Sutcliffe, early Beatie
4 Deadly sin
5 Old stringed instruments
6 Delicate in meaning
7 Rounds of ammunition

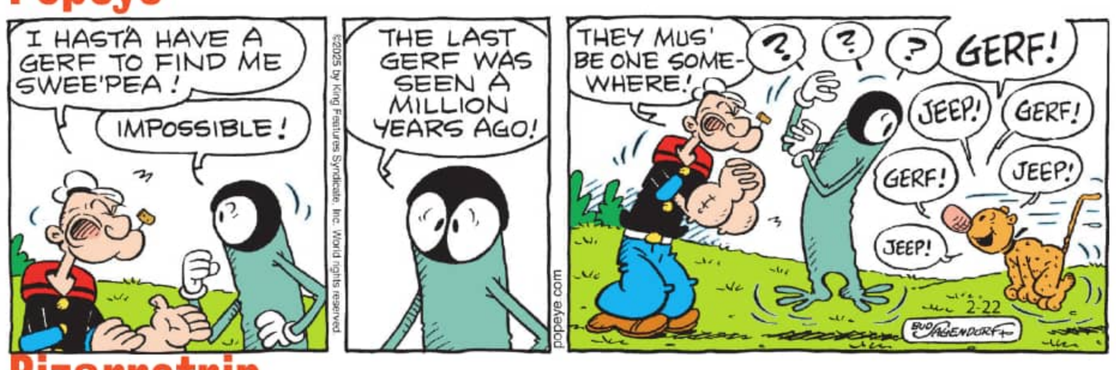


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

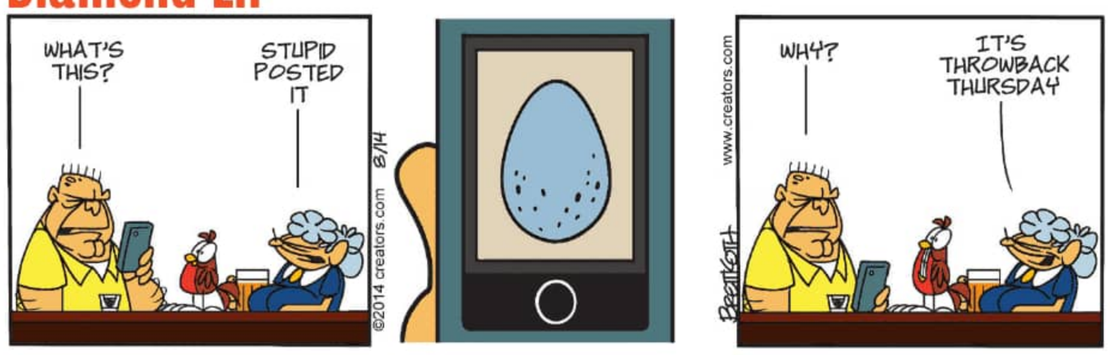
COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil



Hart of the city

WE CAN START ON NEW FRIENDS NOW! THEATER CAMP IS FULL OF OPEN-MINDED AND COOL PEOPLE!
I'VE NEVER HAD TO MAKE MY OWN FRIENDS BEFORE.
IT'S EASY. WHILE YOU'RE HERE, LET YOUR GUARD DOWN A BIT.
WE DO IMPROV EVERY MORNING. NONE OF US IS TAKING THINGS TOO SERIOUSLY.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
@GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY

Crankshaft

WE HAVE THE PERSON YOU WANTED TO SEE!
BUT MY PLAY WON THE GAME!
I KNOW... AND THAT'S WHY WE WANTED TO GIVE YOU A GAME BALL!
#FOR THE W
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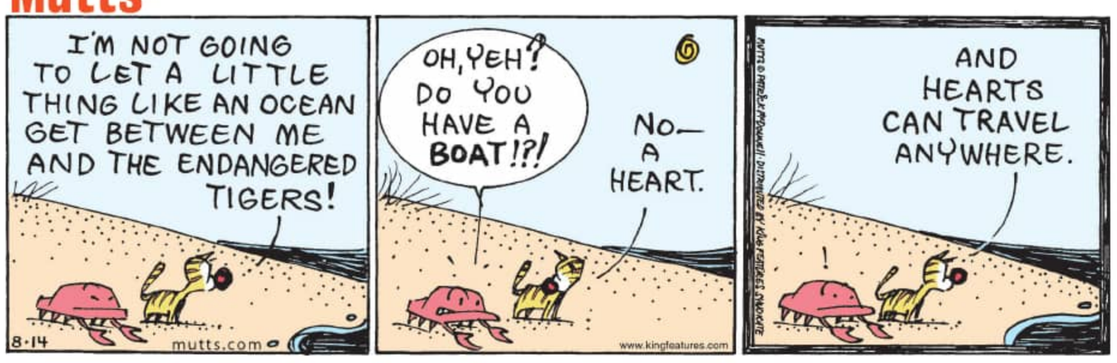
8-14
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts


I'M NOT GOING TO LET A LITTLE THING LIKE AN OCEAN GET BETWEEN ME AND THE ENDANGERED TIGERS!
OH, YEH? DO YOU HAVE A BOAT!?!
No— A HEART.
AND HEARTS CAN TRAVEL ANYWHERE.
8-14
mutts.com
www.kingfeatures.com

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Finances quickly stabilise after a period of uncertainty; a bonus or inheritance is possible this year. Your career benefits immensely from your renewed focus and sharp determination. Love is wonderfully grounding and secure, oering you a reliable, steadfast partner. Family matters require patience and empathy; always aim for understanding.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Fresh ideas promise growth and renewal. Shed outdated beliefs and embrace transformation patiently. Revamps, planning, and self-assurance pave your path toward progress. Your new outlook begins unfolding beautifully today.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

Step back, see life's vastness beyond the present. Stop waiting for signs; trust your instincts. You're guided, but remember your strength. Divine love surrounds you while self-belief leads forward.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Tension brings empowerment. Balance chaos with calm, learning patience through contrast. Blend action with peace and drama with stillness. Move gently; notice small signs of growth blossoming gracefully around you.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Old patterns may stem from generations past. You're chosen to heal them. Embrace growth with love, openness, and self-awareness. Let transformation flow freely through your ever-evolving, compassionate heart.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Release attachments. This transition ends an era and begins a brighter one. Tune inward, silence distractions, and lead confidently. The universe asks, are you ready for rebirth and success?

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Ground yourself, Virgo. Your dreams reflect your selfworth; believe you deserve abundance. Release guilt and fear, and build your magical reality through confidence, stability, and freedom from judgment or expectation.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

You're cosmic stardust, creative and radiant. Infuse everything you touch with love and magic. When energy flows from the heart, your reality transforms into beauty, authenticity, and irreplaceable brilliance.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

Reconnect deeply with life. Ground yourself through nature, sunlight, affection, and stillness. Magic hides in simple moments. Presence restores passion; your treasures await in quiet, soulful experiences today.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Ease the work rhythm. Your spark thrives on curiosity and play. Balance rebellion with purpose, keep mischief alive, and nurture that childlike wonder fuelling your vibrant, unstoppable fire.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Protect your light. Learn where to stop giving excessively. True strength balances empathy with boundaries. Hold space wisely; experience unity without losing your individuality or emotional grounding today.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

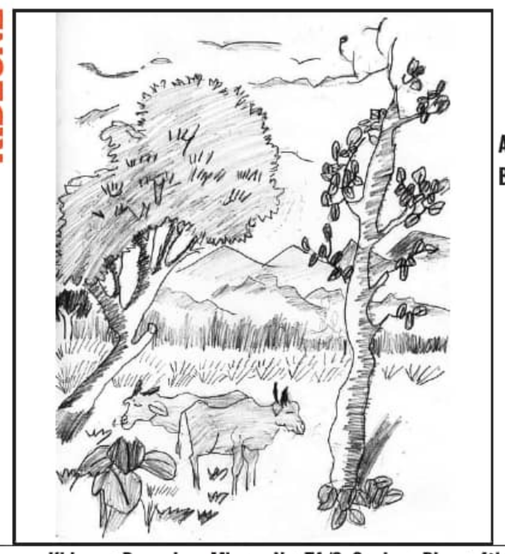
Defy limits. Focused intent makes the impossible achievable. Move through uncertainty with grace, knowing divine threads support you. Stay centred, fearless, and trust life's flow to hold you steady.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Elevate your standards. Balance faith and adaptability like a surfer mastering waves. Merge with life gracefully yet remember, you're the navigator, not the tide. Lead with serenity today.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Ananya, Bengaluru

Vimal, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

2(16–3)–7!
26–7x6x5x4x3x2x1
26–5040 = –5014

RIDDLER

A computers CPU

STRIKE OUT

A	L	L	I	E	S		J	A	B	B	E	D		
G	L	A	K		H	U	G		A	T	I	C		
N	A	U	S	E	A	M	U	D	D	L	E			
A	N		L	U	B	E		E		A				
T	A	C		A	T	N	O		O	G	A	M		
E	H	U	L	A	S		A	N	G	S	T			
R		R	E	R	O	U	T	E		A				
D	I	R	A	C		U	S	E	R	S		P		
W	O	O	L		S	N	E		L	A	R			
E		S		L	U	D	O			O		A		
L	A	T	V	I	A		F	L	O	P	P	Y		
L		E		E	V	E		I		P		E		
S	E	R	E	N	E		P	L	A	Y	E	R		

QUOTE UNCODE

The stars incline, but do not impel.

C	L	I	M	E										
I	L	E	A	L										
N	O	S	E	Y										
A	T	I	L	T										
P	A	N	G	S										

FAST FIVE

MENSA PUZZLE

P The numbers between pairs of letters equal the sum of the numerical values of the letters on either side.

BULL'S EYE

pure, purer, purr, purse, purser, USURPER pursue, PURSUER, ruse, spur, super, sure, surer, user, usurer, usurp,

QUICK

SUDOKU

5	6	9	2	3	8	4	1	7
1	2	4	7	5	6	3	8	9
3	7	8	4	9	1	2	5	6
8	9	2	6	7	4	1	3	5
4	1	6	5	2	3	9	7	8
9	4	3	8	1	7	5	6	2
6	5	7	3	4	2	8	9	1
2	8	1	9	6	5	7	4	3

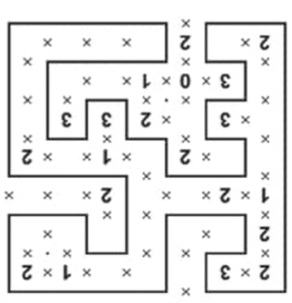
ALPHA TRIANGLE

S, Us, Stu, Lust, Lutes, Subtle, Bullets.

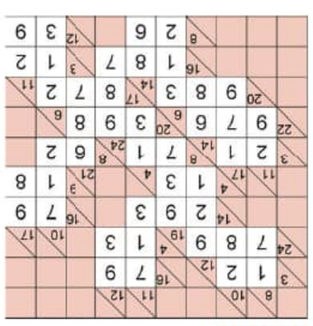
GO FIGURE

Easy
8 + 9 + 2 + 5 = 24
Medium
4 x 9 + 6 – 6 = 36
Hard
8 – 6 x 3 x 4 = 24

LOOP



KAKURO



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 # Wedding postponed
Palash Muchhal, Smriti Mandhana's wedding postponed after her father suffers heart attack

Kriti agrees Delhi air has worsened

Bollywood actress Kriti Sanon, who hails from Delhi, has expressed deep concern over air pollution in the national capital, saying it is getting "worse and worse" and something needs to be done about it.

Kriti Sanon, who addressed a press conference for her upcoming film 'Tere Ishk Mein, said if adequate measures are not taken to combat pollution, it will reach a point "where we won't be able to see each other standing next to us".

"I don't think saying anything will help. It (pollution) is getting worse and worse. I am from Delhi, and I know what it used to be earlier, and it is getting worse. Something needs to be done to stop it; otherwise, it will reach a point where we won't be able to see each other standing next to us," Kriti Sanon said in response to a query.

The Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) has revised the GRAP schedule, making it more stringent to prevent further Deterioration of air quality in Delhi-NCR.

GRAP is an emergency response mechanism for the entire NCR, based on Average AQI levels and forecasts. **–ANI**

Time for reunion

Deepika likes reel requesting romcom starring her and Ranbir and fans go wild

Deepika Padukone and Ranbir Kapoor's on-screen chemistry has always held a special place in the hearts of Bollywood fans. Even though they have starred together only in 'Bachna Ae Haseeno', 'Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani' and 'Tamasha', their pairing remains one of the most loved in modern cinema. Nearly a decade has passed since they last shared the frame, yet the magic of their performances still lingers. And this week, that nostalgia turned into a wave of excitement when a passionate fan publicly begged filmmakers to reunite them in a romcom!

The viral reel featured an emotional request from a fan urging directors and producers to cast the two actors together again. She said, "This is a humble appeal to all directors and producers that can you guys please cast Ranbir Kapoor and Deepika Padukone in a film together? Preferably a romcom?

The reel might have been one among many fan-made videos, but everything changed when Deepika liked it. Fans noticed her reaction immediately, and the comments section erupted. One user wrote, "Deepika liked this reel omg."

Another added, "She liked!! That means DP is ready!" Her single like sparked fresh speculation across social media, with many fans reading it as a sign that she may be open to a reunion. **–ETimes**

An artist's clarity

Rasika Dugal stepped into the shoes of a police officer for the very first time with Delhi Crime, and with each season she continues to bring a quiet strength and layered sensitivity to IPS officer Neeti Singh.

Ask her how she prepares for a character defined by emotional restraint, and she says, "You don't prepare to play an emotion or to hold back from one. You equip yourself with the knowledge and material to build a world around your character. And then you try and respond to the script, the vision of the director and what your co-actors have to offer. I have been shadowing the same police officer since season 1. I go back to meet her every season; and that experience has expanded my world in so many ways. Not only has it made me familiar with police protocol, it has given me insights into what the professional life of the rank of the officer I am playing might look like."

The weight of Delhi Crime might seem daunting, but Rasika approaches it with an artist's clarity. "The idea is to be affected by the work in some way and the intent is to tell the story with sensitivity. That is the ask of the job as a performer. And, honestly, I am more preoccupied with how to get there in the first place — to experience another person's life so that I can play my part in telling the story..." **–ETimes**

Sydney has a 'hard time asking for help'

Hollywood actress Sydney Sweeney is opening up on her weakness, and it is something she feels a large section of women deal with.

The actress has said that women, including herself, find it hard to ask for help as they don't want to be viewed as "weak", reports 'Female First UK'.

The 28-year-old actress portrays former boxer Christy Martin in David Michod's biopic and she could relate to her not wanting to show signs of weakness and having to appear like you "have it all together".

She told Sky News, "I have a really hard time with asking for help and my friends recently have really pointed that out to me, and they're like, 'Sydney, it's okay to ask. Like, you can'. There's nothing wrong with it, but I have a hard time with it".

She continued, "I think it's hard, especially as a woman, there's so many expectations on us to have it all together. "And if we do ask for help, then it's a sign of weakness. And we don't want to be viewed that way, even though, (a man) can ask for it, and no one's like, 'ah, he's weak'. But if a woman director asks for help, it'd be like, 'oh, she's not prepared for this role'". As per 'Female First UK', the former boxer and domestic abuse survivor recently praised Sydney's portrayal in 'Christy', and said she had the "competitive spirit" needed to bring her to life on the screen. **IANS**

SANDALWOOD SHOTS
Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Fierce dance of Guliga

Koragajja's song - Guliga Guliga - in praise of coastal deity Guliga known as a fierce protector who embodies divine justice was released recently. The song choreographed by Hollywood-Bollywood choreographer Sandeep Soparrkar is a rap-style track written by lyricist-cum-director Sudheer Attavara with music by Gopi Sundar. It is sung by Javed Ali, Sudheer Attavar and Gopi Sundar.

Attavar said Koragajja is about Guliga born as the 24th song of Nelu Sanke. "Guliga's hunger was so terrifying that even after drinking the blood of a thousand hens and a thousand horses, it did not stop. It finally calmed only when he drank, once, from the little finger of Lord Srimannarayana. Because of this story, worship of Guliga across Tulu Nadu remains overwhelming," the director said.

Guliga Guliga and Soparrkar's performance are the movie's highlights. "Soparrkar's performance defines Guliga's spirit and importance. Sardar Satya plays Panjurli in the movie," the director said.

4 stories in one

The trailer of Nenapugala Maathu Madhura was unveiled at Renukamba Preview Theater in the presence of Kannada Film Producers' Association president Umesh Banakar, Navashakthi Nagaraj, Mahendra, Lokendra, and Munikrishna. Sevenraj aka Red & White Sevenraj has bankrolled the movie and plays a key role in the film directed by Afzal.

Sevenraj said that he has been associated with Sandalwood for more than three decades. "I have acted in many Kannada movies and also Malayalam movies. I have bankrolled two Kannada movies. Nenapugala Maathu Madhura is my third movie as a producer. I am very happy with the release of the movie's trailer on the occasion of my birthday. After this movie, I plan to make a biopic about myself, titled 7 to 77," he said. Director Afzal said the Nenepugala Maathu Madhur is his third movie as a director. "It is an anthology of four stories. The duration of each story is 25 minutes. Some of the issues in society inspired me to write the script for this movie," the director said.